

# COMBINATION NICOTINE REPLACEMENT THERAPY

## NICOTINE PATCH 7 MG, 14 MG, 21 MG

*Use Daily*

### WHAT DOES IT DO?

The patch will release small but continuous amounts of nicotine into the body through the skin to help decrease withdrawal symptoms.

### HOW DO I USE IT?

- Begin using the patch on your quit date.
- Each day, remove the old patch when you wake up, and apply one new patch.
- Peel the back off the patch and put it on clean, dry, hair-free skin on your upper arm, chest, or back.
- Press patch firmly in place for 10 seconds so it will stick well to your skin. If needed, you can apply medical adhesive tape over the patch to keep it in place.
- You can bathe, shower, and swim while wearing the patch.
- Avoid wearing the patch on the same area more than once a week.
- Fold the used patch in half with the sticky sides together and throw it in the regular trash, away from children or pets.
- If you slip up and use tobacco, continue using the patch and try not to smoke or dip.
- If you start with 21 mg patches, you can use the patch for one to two months. When you are ready, step down to a lower dose and continue reducing over time. Tapering off usually takes about three to four months, but sometimes it may take longer. Talk with your healthcare provider about your goals for decreasing use.

### WHAT ARE THE POSSIBLE SIDE EFFECTS?

- May cause minor burning, itching, or redness of skin. To reduce this problem, avoid using the patch on the same area in one week.
- If you have skin irritation for more than four days or if you have severe burning or hives, remove the patch and stop using it. Contact your healthcare provider right away.
- Sleep problems or vivid dreams may occur. If so, remove the patch before going to sleep.

## NICOTINE GUM 2 MG, 4 MG

*Use as Needed*

### WHAT DOES IT DO?

The gum releases nicotine to help decrease withdrawal symptoms and may be used as needed for strong cravings.

### HOW DO I USE IT?

- Begin using the gum on your quit date.
- Unlike regular gum, bite down slowly a few times until you feel a slight tingling in your mouth.
- Park the gum between your cheek and gum. Leave it there for about one minute so you can absorb the nicotine.
- Repeat biting and parking until the taste or tingle is gone. One piece of gum lasts 20–30 minutes.
- Avoid eating or drinking anything acidic, such as soda or coffee, 15 minutes before using the gum or during use.
- Use as needed throughout the day.
- Use up to 10 pieces per day in the first week.
- Each week, self-assess and slowly decrease your use of the gum over three to four months, or longer if needed. Talk with your healthcare provider about your goals for decreasing use.
- You can use sugar-free gum or sugar-free lozenges to replace the nicotine gum.
- If you lower your nicotine patch strength, you may want to increase your use of nicotine gum for a while. When you are ready, begin reducing your use of the gum again.
- Always carry the gum with you.
- If you slip up and use tobacco, continue using the gum and try not to smoke or dip.

### WHAT ARE THE POSSIBLE SIDE EFFECTS?

- May cause mouth soreness, oral irritation, hiccups, jaw aches, nausea, and vomiting. Proper gum use can help to avoid these side effects.
- If you have any intolerable side effects, stop using the gum and contact your healthcare provider.

Use these tools for additional support!



#### Sign up for SmokefreeVET Text

Text **VET** to **47848** or go to **Smokefree.gov/vet**.



#### Call the Quitline

Speak with a Quit VET counselor Monday–Friday.  
Dial **1-855-QUIT-VET** (1-855-784-8838).

Using medication together with behavioral counseling gives you the best chance of quitting tobacco.  
Talk with your healthcare provider about the best medication for you.

VETERANS HEALTH ADMINISTRATION

**Smokefree.gov/veterans**

VA



U.S. Department  
of Veterans Affairs

 **smokefreevet**

**1-855-Quit-Vet**  
TOBACCO QUITLINE